

## Without the Gate by Cellodong13

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**Summary:** Hey guys! So, this is my first attempt at a fanfiction writing, so don't be afraid to leave reviews telling me what I can do better. This is set after Season 2, about a week after the Snowball. Enjoy!

## Without the Gate

They thought that it would all be over.

They had thought that, once Eleven had closed the Gate, everything-the Demogorgons, the Upside Down, the Mind Flayer- they had thought that it would all become a distant memory, a thing of the past, and life could finally return to normal.

They had no idea how wrong they were.

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"Something is coming. Something hungry for blood. A shadow grows on the wall behind you, swallowing you in darkness. It...is almost here."

"What is it?" Will asked, the excitement evident in his voice.

"What if it's the Slime King? Oh Jesus, we're so screwed if it's the Slime King," Dustin exclaimed, the curly-haired boy clutching his cap in panic.

"It's not the Slime King!" Luca said, exasperated.

"But-"

"Ughh," Max sighed, rolling her eyes and blowing a strand of hair out of her face, "Will you two stalkers shut it so we can fight whatever it is already?"

Mike glared at Max from behind his DM screen as his two friends stopped their bickering, then slammed a figurine down on the board.

"A Demogorgon!"

The entire Party went silent as all eyes turned to Will, whose face had gone white.

It had been over a month since Eleven had closed the Gate and trapped the Mind Flayer, killing the Demodogs in the process. Life

was starting to return to normal which, for the four members of the Hawkins Middle School AV Club, meant playing Dungeons and Dragons in Mike's basement.

Lucas has roped Max-after promising her that she could be a new class of zoomer- into playing with them (a minor miracle that most of them were now regretting, as Max had absolutely none of the patience required to play the game), but Hopper had yet to permit Eleven to go out on her own, so it was just the five of them, sitting in the warm rosy basement playing an enjoyable game of DD-until Mike had pulled out that...monster.

"Or the Slime King," Mike said quickly, realizing how much of a mistake he had just made, "An even larger shape."

"No."

Will was pale and trembling, but he reached over and picked up the die, "I cast fireball".

"Are you sure, Will?" Dustin asked, sounding almost scared, "I mean, last time...."

He didn't finish his sentence, but the thought lay in the air like a dark storm cloud-how the last time Will had cast fireball at a Demogorgon, he had been taken to the Upside Down.

"I. Cast. Fireball." Will said, and let the die roll.

Five sets of eyes watched the twenty-sided die turn over and over across the board, until it landed face-up on....

"A seventeen!" Mike almost shouted, "the Demogorgon takes eight points of damage!"

The Party released a tense breath that they didn't realize that they had been holding. Will high-fived Dustin and Lucas, grinning from ear to ear.

"Alright." Lucas said, picking up the die, "Let's kill this thing".

They continued playing for about another half an hour, and finally

made it to the lair of the Slime King ("oh, we're in deep shit") when Karen Wheeler called down from upstairs that Steve and Johnathan had almost arrived, and to finish up their game.

"Oh come on Mom!" Mike whined, walking up the stairs to argue with his mother, Will at his heels saying something about getting drawing stuff back from Holly.

"Well," Max stated, picking up the dice and rolling, "I attempt to stab the Sl-"

"You can't do that, the DM isn't here" Lucas said, nodding towards the stairs.

"And besides, attacking it is a bad idea" Dustin interjected, "if you get out of it's range, then it can't hit you".

"But attacking could mean she could take it down before that even becomes an issue," Lucas countered.

"You know what-"

"Doesn't matter" Max said, "it missed anyway. I suppose the thing got me".

The redhead stood up and stretched, then started for the stairs.

"You owe me big-time for having me play that mind-numbing game for ten of my precious hours, stalker," she called over her shoulder.

The two boys followed her upstairs, where Mike was still arguing with his mom to let them play "just twenty more minutes, Mom! If we end now-"

The doorbell rang, followed by Will's cry of "I'll get it!" and the quick patter of footsteps, accompanied by grunts as Ted Wheeler slowly sat up from his spot on the couch.

Will opened the door in order to admit his older brother and Steve Harrington, his hair as fluffy as ever.

"I am here to take home three of these young children home, and if

they don't come to the door right now, I swear I will leave them here," Steve announced as he strode into the living room, closely followed by Jonathan.

"Do you have all of your stuff Will?" Jonathan asked as Dustin, Lucas, and Max stumbled into the living room, closely followed by Mike and his older sister, Nancy.

"Yep," Will said, as he started for the door, closely followed by the rest of the Party, Max having to practically drag Dustin along to get him out of the house.

The five of them waited on the porch, Dustin attempting to peek through the windows to see what the three teenagers were doing, and Max slapping him every time he did so.

A couple of minutes later, Steve and Jonathan emerged onto the porch, their faces betraying nothing of what could possibly have just occurred. No one really knew what was going on with the Monster Fighting Trio, and they seemed determined to keep it that way.

"Come on you little shits, time to go," Steve said, starting for his car.

"Shotgun!" cried Dustin and Max at the same time and raced after Steve, closely followed by Lucas.

"See you tomorrow, Mike," Will said, and followed Jonathan to his car.

"How was your game?" Jonathan asked as they started driving towards home.

"It was good," Will said, "but you guys interrupted before we could get the Slime King".

"Well, sorry to ruin your fun with an 'early' curfew," Jonathan said, slightly sarcastic, "how about the rest of the game?"

Will began outlining the campaign as Jonathan steadily drove the normal route towards their house in the woods.

"...And then," Will continued, as Jonathan turned the car onto

Mirkwood, "we came across this super cool cave, and thought we were about to face the Slime King, but-"

Will stopped suddenly as, out of the corner of his eye, he saw a large shadow rise up through the windshield, directly in front of the car.

"Jonathan!" he shouted, and reacting on pure instinct, reached over and yanked the wheel hard to the right.

The car spun, barely missing the shadow, and drove right into the ditch, throwing Jonathan and Will forwards.

Will let out a grunt and didn't move, feeling as though the wind had been knocked out of him, when suddenly he heard a noise-almost like a gurgle, or a growl.

His blood froze.

His hair stood on end.

Will turned to look at Jonathan, but he was unconscious, a red welt slowly growing on his forehead from where he had collided with the steering wheel.

The growl came again, louder this time.

Will opened the glove compartment, his breathing coming out hard and fast, as he dug around inside until his hands closed around a cool piece of metal.

Will pulled out the revolver and slowly got out of the car.

The shadow stood, no less than ten yards away, facing Will.

Will tried to steady his breathing and slowly raised the revolver.

The creature growled again, and slowly began creeping closer.

"Stay back!" Will shouted, his voice filled with terror.

The shadow was not deterred. It let loose another gurgle, a sound straight from the boy's nightmares, and charged-

-and Will pulled the trigger.

The bullet hit the thing in the mouth, causing it to rear back in pain. It let out a blood-chilling roar, turned, and vanished back into the woods.

Will stood there breathing hard, before a groaning coming from the car reminded him of his brother.

"Jonathan!" he practically screamed, running around to the driver's side and throwing open the door.

Jonathan was sitting up, rubbing his head, "What-".

Will threw himself into Jonathan's lap, tears starting to stream down his face as his older brother wrapped his arms around him.

"Will?" Jonathan asked, the concern evident in his voice, "what's wrong?"

"It's back," Will sobbed, barely managing to keep himself from falling to pieces, "it's back".

"What is? What's back?"

Will stared up at him, and Jonathan knew that he would never forget the terror that he saw in his little brother's eyes.

"The Demogorgon".